

Burgundy Report

From Bill Nanson's annual Burgundy Report, January 16, 2025. Note that his policy is not to give ratings; he wants you to read what he writes rather than look at scores.

Tasted in Volnay with Etienne Chaix, 06 November 2024.

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Etienne on 2024: *"If I compare to other places – like Chablis or Jura even the Côte de Nuits – not so bad, we are not the unluckiest people. It's okay here at the domaine, between 25-30 hl/ha. We worked hard for that too but I think we saved the harvest. It was also a little more volume than in 2021 and I think it will be of higher quality too – all harvested without rain..."*

Etienne on 2023: *"It passed well for most people I think – we were fortunate. The year started very well – it was more complicated in June and July but the weather at the end of August helped us to maturity – the reverse of previous vintages where we waited for rain after the canicule – so the reverse in 23. Just 3 wines have been bottled at this stage – the whites and the Bourgogne – done at the end of July – the others are in tank."*

The wines...

Such an approachably delicious and involving range of wines this year – I toyed with calling so many of them great – just so delicious... Bravo Etienne!

DIAM for all since 2017 – 10 for whites and magnums, 5 for the rest...

2023 Bourgogne Pinot Noir Vieilles-Vignes A pretty, though compact, nose from opening. Hmm, dimension and juicily fresh – completely delicious flavour. There's a small structural side to this wine – so it should be better in 1-2 years but you can still drink it with pleasure now... Really a nicely long finish too...

2023 Volnay Vieilles-Vignes *From 6 different parcels; mainly Grand and Petits Poisots, Gigotte, Pacquiers and Famines.* Plenty of colour here. More clarity and finer depth of aroma – that's a lovely invitation. Larger in all dimensions but still with fluid and energetic flavour. I love this finishing intensity too – strict today – but great strict!

2023 Pommard Vieilles-Vignes *Normally from Cras, Saucilles, Vaumauriens and Poisot.* Also a fine and vibrant dark fruit – beautiful clarity again. Just a hint of extra depth and cushion to this beautifully textured wine. Also a little structure but this is very attractive wine – maybe my slight favourite of these too – both are excellent villages but today I'll take this!!

2023 Beaune 1er Cru Aux Coucheries A narrower, redder-fruited nose but of good depth and slightly floral too. In the mouth there's so much mouth-filling energy. Quite a floral style to augment the fruit. Clearly the most perfumed wine so far, slowly fading – what an excellent wine and with a really absorbing finish too.

2023 Volnay 1er Cru Fremiets Here's a little extra aromatic density and directly showing some floral perfume. 'Yes' texture and fluidity, juicily finishing. The finish bursts across the palate with a mm of cushion and still some grainless tannin to wait for – but maybe I won't wait too long – a beautiful wine!

2023 Volnay 1er Cru Champans Hmm – it's a beautifully delicate nose that draws me in – pure with accents of boiled-sweet complexity – finesse! Beautifully textured, a waterfall of fluid, melting, juicy flavour. There's some finishing structure but it's never strict. Not a concentrated, brutal, Champans – but a simply gorgeous one.

2023 Volnay 1er Cru Caillerets *Planted in 1982.* Fewer high tones to start but the base of fruit seems wider here. Like the Champans – another cascade of juicy flavour – but this time with a hint more depth to that concentration. Slightly less open today than Champans but very similar. More chewy depth of finishing flavour too. Another beautiful wine, and yes, possibly a small notch higher than Champans this year.

2023 Pommard 1er Cru Clos Micault *Old vines!* Like the Caillerets, a nose that starts broader at the base. Hmm, beautifully textured again – the sense of more weight but again with such juicy fluidity – nothing in excess. Broad, broad finishing – wrapped with more finishing tannin – but again grainless. That's a super Micault!

2023 Pommard 1er Cru Les Epenots *From Petits Epenots, in the last part before Beaune Epenottes, below Pommard Boucherottes. Similar oak elevage to Caillerets* More open top notes here – a wine that draws you in. Good scale – but there's more considered concentration here. Weight to this flavour – with plenty of balancing energy, but more composed and contemplative than previous wines. Long and calm finishing, very pure flavours too. Love it...

2023 Pommard 1er Cru Pèzerolles Fresh and wide – that's an attractive nose – emphasis on the berries here. More energetic and fluid than the Epenots – more like previous wines. Intense, juicy – hmm – that's just so involving in the finish. Faintly of tannin in the finish – like Micault but already too drinkable !!

2023 Pommard 1er Cru Les Rugiens “*Yes, I'm like a child in a large store every year at harvest time in Rugiens*” Extra width of aroma – more complex, less overtly fruit-driven. Such a beautiful width – concentrated but fluid again – then raising to a peak of flavour before the finish. Holding like most of the Pommards with a small finishing tannin – but again grainless. Slowly, slowly fading. Wait, of course, but maybe not too long – 3-5 years?

Les Whites: *These last two both bottled:*

2023 Meursault Les Chevalières *'Purely by chance, grandfather had the chance to buy in two very limestone parcels – his wife was sure that he significantly overpaid – which meant many bouquets of flowers for her in the years that followed!'* What depth! Here's a nose of clarity, slightly mineral aromas wrapping white fruit. In the mouth,

the energy and sucrosity, ginger inflected, cut through anything that the reds may have left behind on the palate. Wide, long, and that word again – involving. A small chalky accent to the last flavours.

2023 Meursault 1er Cru Les Cras More width, yet a narrower beam of pure fruit – more citrus inflected here. Texturally, that's quite generous, but the linear style of silky fruit and its mouth-watering style growing wider as you head into the finish are so engrossing. The classic Meursault twist of ginger spice in this finish too – what a properly excellent wine !!